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Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Letter dated 19 December 2008 from the Permanent Representatives of Australia, Austria, Canada, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan and the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to forward to you the Joint Ministerial Statement on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which was launched on 24 September 2008 in New York (see annex). It is our pleasure to inform you that as of 12 December 2008, 96 countries have associated themselves with the Joint Statement. We would be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, under agenda items 95 and 114 (t).

(*Signed*) Robert **Hill**
Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Thomas **Mayr-Harting**
Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations

(*Signed*) John **McNee**
Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Jorge **Urbina**
Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Kirsti **Lintonen**
Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Yukio **Takasu**
Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Frank **Majoor**
Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 19 December 2008 from the Permanent Representatives of Australia, Austria, Canada, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan and the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Joint Ministerial Statement on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

24 September 2008
New York

1. We, the Foreign Ministers who have issued this statement, reaffirm our strong support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which would rid the world of nuclear weapons test explosions and would contribute to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

2. In this year marking the 12th anniversary of the Treaty's opening for signature, we emphasize that the CTBT is a major instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The Treaty was an integral part of the 1995 agreements by the States parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) allowing the indefinite extension of the Treaty. The early entry into force of the CTBT was recognized at the 2000 Review Conference of the NPT as a practical step to achieving NPT nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives, and has also been reaffirmed as being of central importance by the UN General Assembly.

3. We recall the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, that adopted in September 2007 a declaration by consensus outlining measures consistent with international law to encourage further signature and ratification of the Treaty.

4. We affirm that the CTBT will make an important contribution by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, as well as preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects. The entry into force of the Treaty is vital to the broader framework of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. Progress on this issue would also contribute to a positive outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the NPT.

5. We welcome that the CTBT has achieved near universal adherence with signature by 179 States and ratification by 144 States as of today. Of the 44 States whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty, nine have yet to do so. We welcome the four ratifications that have occurred since the entry into force conference last year, in particular that of Colombia, one of the states whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty. We call upon all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay, in particular those whose ratification is needed for its entry into force. We recognise the extensive range of bilateral and joint outreach efforts by signatories and

ratifiers to encourage and assist States which have not yet signed and ratified the Treaty. We commit ourselves individually and together to make the Treaty a focus of attention at the highest political levels and to take measures to facilitate the signature and ratification process. We support the efforts by the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization to facilitate such process by providing legal and technical information and advice.

6. We call upon all States to continue a moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions. Voluntary adherence to such a moratorium is a welcome step, but does not have the same permanent and legally binding effect as the entry into force of the Treaty. We reaffirm our commitment to the Treaty's basic obligations and call on all States to refrain from acts which would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty pending its entry into force. With respect to the nuclear test announced by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 9 October 2006, bearing in mind UNGA Res 61/104, we underline the need for a peaceful solution of the nuclear issues through successful implementation of the Six Party Talks Joint Statement of September 2005 and we urge the DPRK to fulfil its commitments therein and to fully comply with Security Council resolutions 1695 and 1718. We note that the verification regime successfully detected the aforementioned event and believe that it highlighted the urgent need for the early entry into force of the Treaty.

7. We welcome the progress made in building up all elements of the verification regime, which shall be capable of verifying compliance with the Treaty at its entry into force. We will provide the support required to complete and operate the verification regime in the most efficient and cost-effective way. We will also promote technical cooperation to enhance verification capabilities under the CTBT.

8. In addition to its primary function, the CTBT International Monitoring System as part of the verification regime is bringing scientific and civil benefits, including for tsunami warning systems and possibly other disaster alert systems, through civil and scientific applications of waveform and radionuclide technologies and use of the data. We will continue to seek ways to ensure that these benefits will be broadly shared by the international community in conformity with the Treaty.

9. We appeal to all States to make maximum efforts towards achieving the early entry into force of the CTBT. On our part we dedicate ourselves to realizing this goal.

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Bahrain	Bangladesh

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